

for two years (1722-4) at Cambrai, and then had 'the floor pulled from under it' by a clandestine agreement between two of the participants; a third gathered with no better success at Soissons in 1728-9. 'You must', Cardinal Fleury had said to the Abbé de St. Pierre, 'begin by sending a troop of missionaries to prepare the hearts and minds of the contracting sovereigns'; and there was little prospect of a League of Nations to secure peace so long as nations were ruled by irresponsible monarchs and States were regarded as their personal property. For greed acts with directer force upon an individual than upon the average member of a community, and the proprietary notion of the State gave its owner a personal interest in its aggrandizement which was fatal to all schemes for preventing wars of aggression.

The futility of the early eighteenth-century Congresses was followed by another series of wars, and it was not until the anti-monarchical movement of thought, stimulated by the American War of Independence, gathered force, that a more democratic conception of the 'European Republic', as St. Pierre had called it, became possible. Voltaire and Rousseau in France, Bentham in England, and even Kant in Germany advocated more popular forms of government than paternal despotism as essential to the maintenance of international peace. But the French Revolution, pacifist though it was, like the Russian revolution, in its earlier stages, provoked a conflict